

VZCZCXRO2044

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FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4515
INFO RUCNRAQ/IRAQ COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE
RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RHMFIUU/EUCOM POLAD VAIHINGEN GE PRIORITY
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RHMFISS/HQ USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC//J-3/J-5// PRIORITY
RHEHAAA/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEUITH/ODC ANKARA TU PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC//USDP:PDUSDP/ISA:EUR/ISA:NESA/DSCA// PRIORITY
RUEHAK/USDAO ANKARA TU PRIORITY
RUEUITH/TLO ANKARA TU PRIORITY

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SUBJECT: TURKEY: POSITIVE REACTIONS TO DECEMBER 1
CROSS-BORDER ARTILLERY STRIKE

REF: ANKARA 2867

¶1. (U) Summary: There has been no subsequent military action following artillery strikes against PKK positions in northern Iraq on December 1. However, senior GOT officials have publicly reaffirmed Turkey's readiness to make additional hits on PKK bases across the border and have said it is now up to the military leadership to decide on the timing and scope of future operations. Local media credit the U.S. role in providing the intelligence for the attack. End summary.

¶2. (U) President Gul told reporters December 2 that the military had been granted a mandate to conduct operations against the PKK, and that it would exercise its mandate when it deems necessary. In a December 2 TV interview, Government Spokesman and Deputy Prime Minister Cemil Cicek emphasized the same point and stated that the Turkish General Staff (TGS) would decide on the timing and scope of future operations according to need. He stated that there is very careful planning to ensure that any actions taken across the border would be "free from error."

¶3. (U) Several dailies credit the Turkish Army's "heavy blow" to PKK terrorists to the intelligence supplied by the U.S. The December 3 "Radikal" states that the U.S. had extended support to the Turkish operation and quotes the Pentagon spokesman's statement that "Turkey has the right to defend itself." It also underscores a quote from NSC spokesperson Gordon Johndroe in Washington that, "close cooperation between the U.S. and Turkey will continue." The December 3 "Hurriyet" notes that Saturday's strike was the first result of the new cooperation between the U.S. and Turkey in the fight against terror.

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